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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

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HEADLINES

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Bush Warns Denmark to Prohibit Roj-TV - Sabah 11/20
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Bush, CIA Distorted Germans' Pre-War Intelligence - Sabah
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OPINION MAKERS

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US to Denmark: Ban Roj TV - Radikal 11/20
Rice Involved in CIA Leak Scandal - Yeni Safak
Bush: Iraq War Will Continue Until Victory - Cumhuriyet

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Former CIA Chief: Cheney is 'VP for Torture' - Cumhuriyet

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Lockheed-Martin Involved in Iraq Interrogations - Cumhuriyet

UK Press: Iraqi Interior Ministry Wages War against Sunnis - Radikal

Suicide Bomber Kills 48 in Bakuba - Zaman 11/ 20

Palestine Elections May be Put Off - Cumhuriyet

Sharon to Found New, Moderate Party - Cumhuriyet

US-China Summit in Beijing - Cumhuriyet

Bush's China Visit: A Pinch of Freedom, Plenty of Trade - Radikal

Bush Demands Religious Freedom in China - Yeni Safak

Holbrooke: Dayton Accord Needs Improvement - Zaman

Bosnia Pins Hopes on Americans - Zaman 11/20

BRIEFING

Erdogan Visits Troubled Southeast: On Monday, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan paid a surprise visit to the southeastern town of Semdinli, pledging support for a probe of alleged security force links to a bombing which has fueled a series of violent clashes. Tensions have escalated in Hakkari province since the November 9 bombing that is blamed on members of the security forces. The government has demanded a parliamentary inquiry into the bombing. 'We will monitor the legal process and do whatever is necessary on the administrative front. Whatever ethnic or religious group we are part of, we must live together hand-in-hand,' Erdogan, flanked by heavily armed bodyguards, told a crowd of hundreds in Semdinli earlier today. Erdogan was accompanied by Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu and Justice

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Minister Cemil Cicek. Monday papers carry a "Newsweek" commentary speculating that the Semdinli incident could 'put Erdogan on a collision course with what Turks call the Deep State -- a shady alliance of nationalist officers, bureaucrats and judges who consider themselves the true guardians of Turkey's interests.' Former Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit said over the weekend that the bombing in Semdinli was planned and carried out by the jandarma intelligence organization, JITEM. On Tuesday, the Turkish parliament will debate a motion to investigate the Semdinli incident. Meanwhile, one man was killed and another was wounded in clashes between police and pro-Kurdish demonstrators at a rally in the southern city of Mersin on Sunday. The group was protesting against the killing of two people in the southeastern province of Hakkari on November 15. In the neighboring city of Adana, police arrested four people for taking part in an illegal demonstration. Pro-Kurdish demonstrators also clashed with police in two Istanbul neighborhoods on Sunday. The demonstrators turned over an armed personnel carrier and set it ablaze.

US Pressures Denmark to Ban Roj TV: The United States has extended Turkey a helping hand by making a request to the Danish Government urging the closure of pro-Kurdish Roj-TV, weekend papers reported. The station is suspected of having links with the PKK terrorist organization. 'We strongly urge the Danish Government to shut down Roj-TV, Mesopotamia TV, and MBMG (two other media outlets linked to Roj-TV) and seize their assets. We do not believe these sorts of broadcasts should enjoy a safe haven in Europe,' the US Administration reportedly said in its demarche. The US used exactly the same arguments as Turkey, stating that Roj-TV has links with the outlawed PKK. During a visit to Copenhagen on November 15, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan angrily called off a joint press conference with Anders Fogh Rasmussen because reporters from Roj-TV were present. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said over the weekend that Prime Minister Erdogan's posture played an important role in the US warning to Denmark over the issue. 'Not only the US, but many European states are of the opinion that Roj-TV should be banned. Had PM Erdogan appeared at that news

conference, then all Turkish newspapers would have written headlines that the Turkish prime minister shared a forum with the terrorist organization,' Gul said. Danish Ambassador Christian Hoppe noted that Roj-TV correspondents could not have been banned from open press meetings in Denmark in the absence of a court decision supporting such a move.

Ankara Warns Barzani against PKK Remarks: Speaking to Turkey's all-news broadcaster NTV in Italy, Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) leader Massoud Barzani said that if civil war were to break out in Iraq, the Kurds would be left no choice but independence, weekend papers reported. Barzani said that a federal structure in Iraq is the only way to avert the danger of a civil war, and to preserve the country's territorial integrity. 'The PKK is Turkey's problem. Its presence on the Iraq-Turkey border and in the mountainous regions along the Turkey-Kurdistan border should not be used to cover up the existence of this problem. The issue is a political one,' Barzani said. Barzani declined to respond to a question about whether the PKK is a terrorist organization. Ankara, disturbed by Barzani's statement, warned Baghdad that such comments could add to the unrest in Hakkari province.

Gul Meets Merkel: Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul met in Berlin on Friday with Christian Democrat Union (CDU) leader

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Angela Merkel, the incoming German Chancellor. Gul reportedly praised the good relationship between the two countries and pleaded for all sides to 'take their time' on the EU question. Merkel emphasized the need for the integration of Turks in Germany, and stressed the need for competence in the German language. Merkel said that cooperation between Germany and Turkey remains strong 'despite our difference of view on the EU question.' FM Gul asserted that the idea of an EU 'privileged partnership' was not raised in the discussion. Merkel accepted an invitation from Gul to visit Turkey in the first half of 2006. FM Gul also met with outgoing Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and his successor, Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

EU Will Slow Down Entry Talks if Turkey Denies Nicosia Access to Ports: Saturday's "Vatan" said that the EU committee of permanent representatives (COREPER) is discussing sanctions to be applied if Turkey refuses to give Greek Cypriots access to Turkish ports and airports. EU sources said that if Turkey denies access to Nicosia, the EU will not suspend entry talks with Turkey, but will slow down the negotiations. Talks on key chapters will not begin before Turkey meets EU requirements, and financial aid for Turkey may be suspended, according to EU sources.

Prosecutor to Investigate Erdogan Remarks on ECHR Headscarf Ban: A Turkish prosecutor plans to launch an investigation into comments on Islamic headgear by Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan. The PM's remarks enraged the opposition and revealed a growing rift between secularist opposition groups and the government, weekend papers commented. Erdogan had criticized the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) last week for upholding a ban on the Muslim headscarf in Turkish universities, saying that the ECHR should have consulted Islamic scholars (the 'ulema') before taking its decision on November 10. 'We are closely watching the statements of political party members in the wake of the ECHR decision. Reactions of this type should not go beyond the bounds of legality,' said Nuri Ok, a prosecutor on Turkey's Supreme Court (Yargitay). 'The contemporary values of our republic, with its secular state and legal structure, should not be targeted,' Ok stressed. An AKP spokesman said PM Erdogan had merely meant to advise the ECHR to call on Muslim theologians if it wants to give more precise decisions.

Turkish Involvement in Erez Industrial Zone: The Jerusalem

Post reported on Sunday that Israel, Turkey, and the Palestinian Authority are in talks over substantial Turkish involvement in the Erez industrial zone on the Israel-Gaza border. Israeli officials said that the talks involve discussion of a major Turkish investment in Erez in plants that would manufacture goods that would be exported to the EU, US, and Persian Gulf countries duty free. The plants are expected to employ some 6,000 Palestinians. The discussions with Israel are now believed to be focused on how to ensure quick and reliable transfer of the merchandise out of Gaza. According to one Israeli official, Turkey has asked for assurances from Israel that it would continue to provide electricity and water to the area. The official said that, in general, Jerusalem views the plan favorably, because it will provide 'soft security' for the area, since the Palestinian Administration will have to ensure that terror attacks don't occur in the zone.

Arinc: New Turkish President Will be Elected by Existing Parliament: Parliament Speaker Bulent Arinc said that Turkey's current parliament will elect a new president in 2007. Arinc ruled out an early election before November 2007, despite calls for an election by the opposition CHP.

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'This parliament was renewed on November 2002. Our Constitution says that elections are held every five years. If this government completes its term and it seems likely to do, elections will be held in November 2007. The presidential elections are due in May 2007, so it seems that the current parliament will elect the new president,' Arinc said.

Baykal Reelected CHP Chairman: Deniz Baykal was reelected chairman of the opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) during the party's 31st congress over the weekend. Of the 1,223 ballots cast in the voting, Baykal received 1,158 valid votes. There was no opposition candidate. Addressing the congress, Baykal charged that the AKP government has not been able to come to terms with the principles of the secular and democratic republic. In a reference to the discussion about the 'ulema' (Muslim theologians,) Baykal claimed that PM Erdogan had turned into a 'Taliban.' Regarding the recent incidents in Semdinli and Hakkari, Baykal warned the government needs to distinguish between the PKK and the citizens living in the southeast.

Al-Qaida Suspects Arrested in Konya: A father and son suspected of being members of Al-Qaida were arrested in the conservative central Anatolian province of Konya, Sunday papers reported. Police detained the father and son, who had brought from Istanbul to Konya two electronic cards capable of activating an explosive mechanism. A search conducted in the suspects' house revealed various materials related to the remote operation of various mechanisms, including a bomb. The media notes that the two men had spent a brief time in prison in 2003-04 for their alleged involvement in the Istanbul bombings of November 2003.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq; Syria

"The Reason for Bush's Interest in Turkey"
Erdal Guven argued in the conservative "Tercuman" (11/21): "All of a sudden, President Bush is making some efforts to block the PKK by asking the Danish Prime Minister to close Roj-TV. . Russian President Putin's visit to Turkey and the opening of a new energy corridor through Turkey have caused significant uneasiness in the US. The US is especially worried about close links between China, Russia, and India, and is concerned about the possibility that Turkey will side with them. This is where the sudden US interest in Turkey comes into play. On the one hand, the US is allowing the terrorist group to benefit from shelter in northern Iraq, and is protecting the entire Kurdish presence in that area. On the other hand, the Americans are pressuring Denmark to

close down a television channel linked to the PKK. This is an effort by the US to present itself as if it is siding with Turkey. In fact, it is an obvious American game to manipulate both Turkey and the Kurds by appearing to act in their interests. This is because the US needs the Kurds for its plans for the Middle East, but it also needs to keep Turkey as an ally."

"Iraqi Sunnis Should not Be Alienated"

Kamuran Ozbir commented in the nationalist "Ortadoğu" (11/21): "Although belatedly, the Iraqi ruling coalition took a realistic step by recruiting soldiers from Saddam's former army. The government of Iraq will get even stronger once its dependence on US forces is ended. . Apart from this mistake by Paul Bremer, which has now been corrected, there are other things in Iraq that still need to be put right. According to a report presented to the Congress, the 30 billion dollars approved for Iraq's reconstruction have

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not been properly utilized. Security operations absorbed more money than anything else, and reconstruction projects were not properly audited. In such an environment, it is not surprising that corruption flourished. In sum, the US money didn't really help to improve the lives of the Iraqi people. But the return of Sunni soldiers to the Iraqi army is a good start, and may be a hopeful sign for the future. Social consensus can only be achieved by creating employment opportunities for all groups. The Sunnis should be able to work in other areas as well, such as teaching or health care. Many people were punished just because they used to belong to the Baath Party. In fact, under the former regime Baath Party membership was a precondition for their professional existence. The recruitment of Sunnis could be helpful to prevent an outbreak of civil war and to signal the start of a real rebuilding process."

"Turkey Advises Syria"

Zafer Atay observed in the economic-political "Dunya" (11/21): "At the last minute, Russia and China thwarted a possible decision by the UN to impose sanctions against Syria in case it refuses to cooperate in the Mehlis investigation. Nevertheless, if Syria doesn't fulfill the UN demands by December 15, no one will be able to stand in the way of Syria being punished. Foreign Minister Gul has warned Syria that if the regime ignores this fact, Assad's fate could be similar to Saddam's. There is speculation that FM Gul advised Assad to begin immediate, unconditional cooperation with the international community before he is forced to do it. The close relationship between Ankara and Damascus in recent years has put Turkey in a position to give such advice. The American hawks might be planning to open a front in Syria as well, but Turkey is deeply concerned that -- like in Iraq -- another neighboring country could be drawn into fire and blood. We believe that other countries in the region should do everything in their power to prevent this problem from becoming a chronic one."

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